

Killer Coke The Drink That Represses

Lawsuits are pending in the United States against **Coca-Cola** and its Latin American bottler, **Coca-Cola Femsa**, charging that Coca-Cola's bottlers in Colombia "contracted with or otherwise directed paramilitary security forces that utilized extreme violence and murdered, tortured, unlawfully detained or otherwise silenced trade union leaders."

The suits were filed by the International Labor Rights Fund and the United Steelworkers union on behalf of **SINALTRAINAL** – the major union representing Coca-Cola workers in Colombia – several of its members and the survivors of **Isidro Gil** and **Adolfo de Jesus Munera**, two of its murdered officers. A SINALTRAINAL officer summed up the seriousness of the situation, stating: **"If we lose the fight against Coca-Cola, we will first lose our union, next our jobs and then our lives."**

Other Crimes and Immoral Conduct by Coke Include:

- **Benefiting from hazardous child labor in sugar cane fields in El Salvador:** This was first documented by Human Rights Watch in 2004 and in a nationally-televised British documentary in 2007 and highlighted in Mark Thomas's book "Belching Out the Devil: Global Adventures with Coca-Cola," published in Spring 2009.
- **Labor abuses in China:** Based on undercover investigations at several Coke plants, Chinese press reported in December 2008 that Coke employees are "involved in the most dangerous, intense and tiresome labor, work the longest hours, but receive the lowest wages and face arrears and even cutbacks in their pay." One investigator claimed that Coke violated Chinese labor laws and reported that workers "often worked 12 hours per day for an entire month without a single day off." BBC News (5/21/07) reported that Coca-Cola has been accused of **benefiting from prison labor in China**.
- **Overexploitation and pollution of water sources** in El Salvador, India, Mexico, African countries and elsewhere, thereby destroying community sources of water for drinking and sanitation and the irrigation of crops.
- **Aggressively marketing** to children nutritionally worthless and damaging beverages that health experts say help fuel the obesity, high blood pressure and diabetes epidemics. Artificial sweetener, aspartame, in Coke's diet beverages is linked to numerous serious health disorders.

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Killer Coke Casualties



Isidro Gil Adolfo Munera

Murdered Colombian Union Leaders

KillerCoke.org
KillerCoke.org@gmail.com



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Murdered Colombian Union Leaders

KillerCoke.org
KillerCoke.org@gmail.com

